

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 5 January 2022**b. Date Received:** 18 January 2022**c. Counsel:** [REDACTED]**2. REQUEST, ISSUES, BOARD TYPE, AND DECISION:****a. Applicant's Requests and Issues:**

(1) The current characterization of service for the period under review is Under Other Than Honorable. The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable or a change to General (Under Honorable Conditions).

(2) The applicant, through counsel, seeks relief contending they primarily seek Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care benefits. Their request arguably requires, at a minimum, a reassessment of their prior discharge on account of reference to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

(3) The U.S. Army promulgates its own Army Discharge Review Board (ADRB) regulations obligating it to follow cited equitable cases or to distinguish them. By illustration a previous ADRB case upgraded another respondent's discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions) despite their use of that same amphetamine substance on four occasions. Contrary to that case; however, the applicant had a single use.

(4) There are specific mental challenges the applicant confronted during their deployment and redeployment. The applicant lost their platoon sergeant and executive officer, subjected repeatedly to enemy fire and Improvised Explosive Devices during patrols, lost their aunt during their deployment, their biological mother stole money from their bank account, and after their deployment they learned their fiancé was unfaithful and became pregnant. These events clouded their judgment after their service overseas.

(5) PTSD is cited in their record; however, briefly. They underwent a behavioral health Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment where mental health professions discover they had "had some sleep/PTSD/depression symptoms." There is favorable secretarial precedent to take care of members who have served in combat. The Hagel, Kurta, Wilkie memorandums sets forth guidelines that Boards should follow in deciding whether to grant discharge upgrades to veterans with PTSD.

b. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 29 October 2025, and by a 3-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed to the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12a, the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN, and the reentry code to RE-3.

3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:

a. Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization: Misconduct (Drug Abuse) / Army Regulations 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2) / JKK / RE-4 / Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

b. Date of Discharge: 13 December 2013

c. Separation Facts:

(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate: 25 July 2013

(2) Basis for Separation: wrongfully used dextroamphetamines between on or about 15 March 2013 and on or about 15 April 2013.

(3) Recommended Characterization: Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

(4) Legal Consultation Date: 29 July 2013

(5) Administrative Separation Board: on 29 July 2013, the applicant voluntarily waived consideration of their case by an administrative separation board contingent upon receiving a characterization of service or description of separation no less favorable than a General (Under Honorable Conditions). On 23 September 2013, the separation authority disapproved the applicant's request for a conditional waiver. On 23 October 2013, the Administrative Separation Board recommended the applicant be separated with an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions.

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 6 December 2013 / Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Reenlistment: 8 September 2010 / 3 years, 18 weeks

b. Age at Reenlistment / Education / GT Score: 23 / HS Graduate / 105

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-4 / 11B1O, Infantryman / 3 years, 3 months, 6 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: None

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Afghanistan (29 April 2012 – 30 December 2012)

f. Awards and Decorations: ACM-CS, ARCOM, NDSM, GWTSM, ASR

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) A memorandum, Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of

Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], dated 25 July 2013, reflects the applicant received notification of the initiation of separation action against them from their company commander for Abuse of Illegal Drugs. The reason for the proposed separation action is for wrongfully used dextroamphetamines between on or about 15 March 2013 and on or about 15 April 2013. The company commander recommended the applicant's service be characterized as Under Other Than Honorable Conditions. On the same date the applicant acknowledged receipt of their notification of separation and of the rights available to them.

(2) On 29 July 2013 the applicant completed their Election of Rights acknowledging they have been advised by an attorney of the basis for the contemplated action to separate them for Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs and its effects; of the rights available to them, and of the effect of any action by them in waiving their rights. They requested consideration of their case by an administrative separation board with a personal appearance and requested consulting counsel. They understand they may expect to encounter substantial prejudice in civilian life if a General (Under Honorable Conditions) is issued to them. They further understand that as the result of issuance of a discharge Under Other Than Honorable Conditions they may be ineligible for many or all benefits as a veteran under both Federal and State laws.

(3) On 29 July 2013 the applicant memorandum, subject: Conditional Waiver of Administrative Separation Board for [Applicant], dated 29 July 2013, reflects, prior to completing this form, the applicant was afforded the opportunity to consult with a defense counsel to consider whether or not to submit a conditional waiver. They thereby voluntarily waived consideration of their case by an administrative separation board contingent upon receiving a characterization of service or description of separation no less favorable than a General (Under Honorable Conditions). They elected not to submit statements in their own behalf.

(4) A memorandum, Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, subject: Commander's Report – Proposed Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], dated 30 July 2013, reflects the applicant's company commander recommended the applicant be separated from the Army prior to the expiration of their current term of service. The company commander does not consider it feasible or appropriate to accomplish other disposition as the applicant has limited potential or drive to carry out a task. The separation is in the best interest of the Army.

(5) Three memorandums, subject: Commander Recommendation on Conditional Waiver, dated 12 August 2013 through 5 September 2013, reflects the applicant's company, battalion and brigade commanders recommended disapproval of the applicant's Conditional Waiver.

(6) A memorandum, Headquarters, 7th Infantry Division, subject: Request for a Conditional Waiver of an Administrative Separation Board, dated 23 September 2013, reflects the separation authority disapproved the applicant's conditional waiver request. The applicant's case will be referred to an Administrative Separation Board.

(7) A memorandum, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, subject: Notification to appear before the Administrative Separation Board, dated 24 September 2013, reflects the applicant's notification of an Administrative Separation Board will convene on 23 October 2013. The board will determine whether they applicant should be discharged from the service for commission of a serious offense in accordance with Army Regulation 635-200, paragraph 1412c(2), prior to the expiration of their current term of service.

(8) A DA Form 2627 (Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)) dated 18 October 2013, reflects the applicant received nonjudicial punishment, in that they, did at or near Joint Base Lewis-McChord, on or about 15 April 2013, wrongfully used Dextroamphetamine, a schedule II controlled substance, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. The applicant's punishment consisted of a reduction in rank/grade from specialist/E-4 to private/E-1, forfeiture of \$758.00 pay for two months and extra duty and restriction for 45 days. The applicant elected not to appeal.

(9) A DA Form 1574 (Report of Proceedings by Investigating Officer/Board of Officers) dated 23 October 2013, reflects in –

(a) Section IV (Findings), the allegation of the applicant wrongfully using dextroamphetamines between on or about 15 March 2013 and on or about 15 April 2013, in the notification of proposed separation is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

(b) Section V (Recommendations), in view of the above findings, the board recommends the findings do warrant separation with respect to the applicant, the board recommends the applicant be separated from the U.S. Army with an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions characterization of service.

(c) Section VIII (Action by Appointing Authority) reflects the appointing authority approved the findings and recommendations of the board.

(10) A memorandum, Headquarters, 7th Infantry Division, subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, dated 5 November 2013, reflects the separation authority reviewed the administrative separation board findings and the administrative separation packet pertaining to the applicant and the recommendation for separation from the Army prior to the expiration of their current term of service. They directed the applicant be discharged from the U.S. Army and furnished an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions discharge certificate. The applicant will be reduced to private/E-1 immediately After reviewing the rehabilitative transfer requirement, they determined the requirements do not apply to this action. The separation authority also finds the applicant has not been diagnosed with PTSD or TBI, or reasonably alleges that they have either condition based on service while deployed.

(11) A memorandum, U.S. Army Trial Defense Service – West, Fort Lewis Field Office, subject: Objection to Other Than Honorable Discharge Recommendation from the Administrative Separation Board of [Applicant], dated 6 November 2013, reflects the applicant's Trial Defense Counsel requests the separation authority to disapprove the finding and separate the applicant with no worse than a General (Under Honorable Conditions). The Trial Defense Counsel states –

(a) According to Army Regulation 635-200, paragraph 3-7 (Types of Administrative Discharge/Character of Service) the applicant does not meet the criterion for an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions. The paragraph states an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions is authorized when there is a "pattern of behavior." That is clearly not the case as the only misconduct alleged and presented to the board was the positive urinalysis. The paragraph also states the Under Other Than Honorable Conditions can be for one or more acts "that constitutes a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers in the Army." It then lists a series of examples, all of which do not apply. Wrongful use of a controlled substance is not one of those examples used.

(b) The applicant's company commander stated there was no favorable communications or recommendations for the applicant. However, the applicant's squad leader testified about the applicant's great work ethic, duty performance while deployed, and the fact they continued to do good work while pending separation. This information should have been made available to the chain of command.

(c) There was no evidence to show "a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers in the Army." The applicant deployed to Afghanistan for nine months. Their combat service should be commended and should mitigate the offense. The applicant performed well in garrison, even while going through this process.

(d) A vast majority of Soldiers on Joint Base Lewis-McChord that use illegal substances and have no other misconduct are separated with a General (Under Honorable Conditions). There is nothing with regard to the applicant's case that makes them any worse. In fact, given they have a combat deployment and has performed to standard, this should result in a General (Under Honorable Conditions) discharge.

(12) The applicant's DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) reflects they were discharged on 19 December 2014, with 3 years, 3 months, and 6 days of net active service this period. The DD Form 214 shows in –

- item 24 (Character of Service) – Under Other Than Honorable
- item 26 (Separation Code) – JKK
- item 27 (Reentry Code) - 4
- item 28 (Narrative Reason for Separation) – Misconduct (Drug Abuse)

i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: NA

a. Behavioral Health Condition(s): The following documents have been provided to the ARBA Medical Advisor. See "Board Discussion and Determination" for Medical Advisor Details.

(1) **Applicant provided:** excerpt of Service Treatment Record, Medical Report reflecting the applicant "has some sleep/PTSD/depression symptoms. [Servicemember] SM is pending separation for positive urinalysis. Awaiting [Behavioral Health] BH eval for this process." Assessment reflects subclinical symptoms that do not meet criteria for PTSD.

(2) **AMHRR Listed:** None

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:

- DD Form 293 (Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States)
- Counsel's memorandum, subject: Request for Discharge Upgrade
- excerpt of Service Treatment Record, Medical Record

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: none submitted with the application.

7. STATUTORY, REGULATORY AND POLICY REFERENCE(S):

a. Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1553, (Review of Discharge or Dismissal) provides for the creation, composition, and scope of review conducted by a Discharge Review Board(s) within established governing standards. As amended by Sections 521 and 525 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1553 provides

specific guidance to the Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards when considering discharge upgrade requests by Veterans claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sexual trauma, intimate partner violence (IPV), or spousal abuse, as a basis for discharge review. The amended guidance provides that Boards will include, as a voting board member, a physician trained in mental health disorders, a clinical psychologist, or a psychiatrist when the discharge upgrade claim asserts a mental health condition, including PTSD, TBI, sexual trauma, IPV, or spousal abuse, as a basis for the discharge. Further, the guidance provides that Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards will develop and provide specialized training specific to sexual trauma, IPV, spousal abuse, as well as the various responses of individuals to trauma.

b. Office, Secretary of Defense memorandum (Supplemental Guidance to Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Discharge Upgrade Requests by Veterans Claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), 3 September 2014, directed the Service Discharge Review Boards (DRBs) and Service Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs) to carefully consider the revised PTSD criteria, detailed medical considerations and mitigating factors when taking action on applications from former service members administratively discharged UOTHC and who have been diagnosed with PTSD by a competent mental health professional representing a civilian healthcare provider in order to determine if it would be appropriate to upgrade the characterization of the applicant's service.

c. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Clarifying Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Requests by Veterans for Modification of their Discharge Due to Mental Health Conditions, Sexual Assault, or Sexual Harassment), 25 August 2017 issued clarifying guidance for the Secretary of Defense Directive to DRBs and BCM/NRs when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharges due in whole or in part to mental health conditions, including PTSD; Traumatic Brain Injury; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Boards are to give liberal consideration to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part to those conditions or experiences. The guidance further describes evidence sources and criteria and requires Boards to consider the conditions or experiences presented in evidence as potential mitigation for misconduct that led to the discharge.

d. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Regarding Equity, Injustice, or Clemency Determinations), 25 July 2018 issued guidance to Military DRBs and BCM/NRs regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations. Clemency generally refers to relief specifically granted from a criminal sentence. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to other corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted based on equity or relief from injustice.

(1) This guidance does not mandate relief but rather provides standards and principles to guide Boards in application of their equitable relief authority. In determining whether to grant relief on the basis of equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, DRBs shall consider the prospect for rehabilitation, external evidence, sworn testimony, policy changes, relative severity of misconduct, mental and behavioral health conditions, official governmental acknowledgement that a relevant error or injustice was committed, and uniformity of punishment.

(2) Changes to the narrative reason for discharge and/or an upgraded character of service granted solely on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds normally should not result in separation pay, retroactive promotions, and payment of past medical expenses or similar

benefits that might have been received if the original discharge had been for the revised reason or had the upgraded service characterization.

e. Army Regulation 15-180 (Army Discharge Review Board) sets forth the policies and procedures under which the Army Discharge Review Board is authorized to review the character, reason, and authority of any Servicemember discharged from active military service within 15 years of the Servicemember's date of discharge. Additionally, it prescribes actions and composition of the Army Discharge Review Board under Public Law 95-126; Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1553; and Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 1332.41 and DoD Instruction 1332.28.

f. Army Regulation 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations) effective 6 September 2011, set policies, standards, and procedures to ensure the readiness and competency of the force while providing for the orderly administrative separation of Soldiers for a variety of reasons. It prescribes the policies, procedures, and the general provisions governing the separation of Soldiers before expiration term of service or fulfillment of active duty obligation to meet the needs of the Army and its Soldiers.

(1) An Honorable discharge is a separation with honor and is appropriate when the quality of the Soldier's service generally has met the standards of acceptable conduct and performance of duty for Army personnel or is otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization would be clearly inappropriate.

(2) A General discharge is a separation from the Army under honorable conditions and is issued to a Soldier whose military record is satisfactory but not sufficiently meritorious to warrant an honorable discharge.

(3) An Under Other Than Honorable Conditions Discharge is an administrative separation from the Service under conditions other than honorable. It may be issued for misconduct, fraudulent entry, security reasons, or in lieu of trial by court-martial in the following circumstances, (1) when the reason for separation is based upon a pattern of behavior that constitutes a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers of the Army, (2) when the reason for separation is based upon one or more acts or omissions that constitutes a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers of the Army.

(4) Chapter 14 (Separation for Misconduct) established policy and prescribed procedures for separating members for misconduct. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impractical or unlikely to succeed. Paragraph 14-12c(2) (Abuse of Illegal Drugs is Serious Misconduct), stated, however; relevant facts may mitigate the nature of the offense. Therefore, a single drug abuse offense may be combined with one or more minor disciplinary infractions or incidents of other misconduct and processed for separation. A discharge under other than honorable conditions is normally appropriate for a Soldier discharged under this chapter. However, the separation authority may direct a general discharge if such is merited by the Soldier's overall record.

(5) Chapter 15 (Secretarial Plenary Authority), currently in effect, provides explicitly for separation under the prerogative of the Secretary of the Army. Secretarial plenary separation authority is exercised sparingly and seldom delegated. Ordinarily, it is used when no other provision of this regulation applies, and early separation is clearly in the Army's best interest. Separations under this paragraph are effective only if approved in writing by the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary's approved designee as announced in updated memoranda. Secretarial separation authority is normally exercised on a case-by-case basis.

g. Army Regulation 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes) provides the specific authorities (regulatory or directive), reasons for separating Soldiers from active duty, and the SPD codes to be entered on the DD Form 214. It identifies the SPD code of “JKK” as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12c(2), misconduct (drug abuse).

h. Army Regulation 601-210 (Regular Army and Reserve Components Enlistment Program) governs eligibility criteria, policies, and procedures for enlistment and processing of persons into the Regular Army, the U.S. Army Reserve, and Army National Guard for enlistment per DoD Instructions 1304.26. It also prescribes the appointment, reassignment, management, and mobilization of Reserve Officers’ Training Corps cadets under the Simultaneous Membership Program. Chapter 4 provides the criteria and procedures for waiverable and nonwaiverable separations. Table 3-1, defines reentry eligibility (RE) codes:

(1) RE-1 Applies to: Person completing his or her term of active service who is considered qualified to reenter the U.S. Army. Eligibility: Qualified for enlistment if all other criteria are met.

(2) RE-3 Applies to: Person who is not considered fully qualified for reentry or continuous service at time of separation, but disqualification is waiverable. Eligibility: Ineligible unless a waiver is granted.

(3) RE-4 Applies to: Person separated from last period of service with a nonwaiverable disqualification. This includes anyone with a DA imposed bar to reenlistment in effect at time of separation or separated for any reason (except length of service retirement) with 18 or more years active Federal service. Eligibility: Ineligible for enlistment.

i. Army Regulation 600-85 (Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)) governs the program and identifies Army policy on alcohol and other drug abuse, and responsibilities. The ASAP is a command program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility. The ultimate decision regarding separation or retention of abusers is the responsibility of the Soldier’s chain of command. Abuse of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs by military personnel is inconsistent with Army values and the standards of performance, discipline, and readiness necessary to accomplish the Army’s mission. Unit commanders must intervene early and refer all Soldiers suspected or identified as alcohol and/or drug abusers to the ASAP. The unit commander should recommend enrollment based on the Soldier’s potential for continued military service in terms of professional skills, behavior, and potential for advancement.

j. Manual for Courts-Martial, United States (2012 Edition) stated, military law consists of the statutes governing the military establishment and regulations issued thereunder, the constitutional powers of the President and regulations issued thereunder, and the inherent authority of military commanders. Military law includes jurisdiction exercised by courts-martial and the jurisdiction exercised by commanders with respect to nonjudicial punishment. The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the Armed Forces. Appendix 12 (Maximum Punishment Chart) Manual for Courts-Martial shows the maximum punishments include punitive discharge for violating Article 112a (Wrongful Use, Possession, etc., of Controlled Substances).

8. SUMMARY OF FACT(S):

a. The Army Discharge Review Board considers applications for upgrade as instructed by Department of Defense Instruction 1332.28.

b. A review of the available evidence reflects as the applicant received nonjudicial punishment under the provisions of Article 15, UCMJ for testing positive for Dextroamphetamine, had their case considered by an Administrative Separation Board and was involuntarily discharged from the U.S. Army. Their DD Form 214 provides they were discharged with a character of service of Under Other Than Honorable Conditions for misconduct (drug abuse). They completed 3 years, 3 months, and 6 days of net active service and complete their first full term of service.

c. Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for separation members for misconduct. Specific categories include minor disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, commission of a serious offense; to include abuse of illegal drugs; and convictions by civil authorities. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impracticable or is unlikely to succeed. A discharge under other than honorable conditions is normally appropriate for a Soldier discharged under this chapter. However, the separation authority may direct a general discharge if such is merited by the Soldier's overall record.

d. Published Department of Defense guidance indicates that the guidance is not intended to interfere or impede on the Board's statutory independence. The Board will determine the relative weight of the action that led to the discharge and whether it supports relief or not. In reaching its determination, the Board shall consider the applicant's petition, available records and/or submitted documents in support of the petition.

9. BOARD DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATION:

a. As directed by the 2017 memo signed by A.M. Kurta, the board considered the following factors:

(1) Did the applicant have a condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** Yes. The Board's Medical Advisor, a voting member, reviewed the applicant's DOD and VA health records, applicant's statement, and/or civilian provider documentation and found that the applicant has the following potentially-mitigating diagnoses/experiences: Alcohol Related Disorder and Adjustment Disorder, asserts PTSD.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** Symptoms existed in-service.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that there is sufficient evidence of a mitigating mental health condition. The applicant reported symptoms of PTSD and was treated for an Adjustment Disorder while in service. Applicant was command referred to ASAP six months after testing positive for amphetamines and given no diagnosis, although excessive alcohol use was noted. Substance use is a common self-medicating strategy for managing emotions and memories related to trauma exposure, and because of the nexus between trauma exposure, avoidance of emotion, and substance use, the basis for separation can be mitigated.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** The Board concurred with the opinion of the Board's Medical Advisor, a voting member. As a result, the ADRB applied liberal consideration and found that the applicant's condition outweighed the listed basis for separation for the aforementioned reason(s).

b. Prior Decisions Cited: N/A

c. Response to Contention(s):

(1) The applicant contends there is favorable secretarial precedent to take care of members who have served in combat. The Hagel, Kurta, Wilkie memorandums sets forth guidelines that Boards should follow in deciding whether to grant discharge upgrades to veterans with PTSD.

The Board considered this contention during proceedings, but ultimately did not address the contention due to an upgrade being granted based on the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use.

(2) The applicant contends the U.S. Army promulgates its own ADRB regulations obligating it to follow cited equitable cases or to distinguish them. By illustration a previous ADRB case upgraded another respondent's discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions) despite their use of that same amphetamine substance on four occasions. Contrary to that case; however, the applicant had a single use.

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(3) The applicant contends there are specific mental challenges they applicant confronted during their deployment and redeployment; these events clouded their judgment after their service overseas.

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(4) The applicant contends PTSD is cited in their record; however, briefly. They underwent a behavioral health Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment where mental health professions discover they had "had some sleep/PTSD/depression symptoms."

The Board considered this contention during proceedings, but ultimately did not address the contention due to an upgrade being granted based on the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use.

(5) The applicant contends they primarily seek VA health care benefits. Their request arguably requires, at a minimum, a reassessment of their prior discharge on account of reference to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The Board considered this contention during proceedings, but ultimately did not address the contention due to an upgrade being granted based on the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use.

e. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable because the applicant's symptoms of PTSD as outlined in medicals records, though void of a

ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE**AR20220004486**

diagnosis demonstrated mental impairment, thus outweighing the applicant's one-time drug use. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(2) The Board voted to change the reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) under the same pretexts, thus the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. The SPD code associated with the new reason for discharge is JKN.

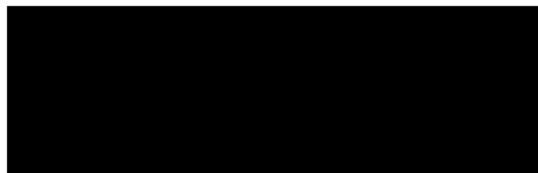
(3) The Board voted to change the RE code to RE-3.

10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

- a. Issue a New DD-214: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Reason / SPD Code to: Misconduct (Minor Infractions)/JKN
- d. Change RE Code to: RE-3
- e. Change Authority to: AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12a

Authenticating Official:

3/21/2026

**Legend:**

AWOL – Absent Without Leave
AMHRR – Army Military Human
Resource Record
BCD – Bad Conduct Discharge
BH – Behavioral Health
CG – Company Grade Article 15
CID – Criminal Investigation
Division
ELS – Entry Level Status
FG – Field Grade Article 15

GD – General Discharge
HS – High School
HD – Honorable Discharge
IADT – Initial Active Duty Training
MP – Military Police
MST – Military Sexual Trauma
N/A – Not applicable
NCO – Noncommissioned Officer
NIF – Not in File
NOS – Not Otherwise Specified

OAD – Ordered to Active Duty
OBH (I) – Other Behavioral
Health (Issues)
OMPF – Official Military
Personnel File
PTSD – Post-Traumatic Stress
Disorder
RE – Re-entry
SCM – Summary Court Martial
SPCM – Special Court Martial

SPD – Separation Program
Designator
TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury
UNC – Uncharacterized
Discharge
UOTHHC – Under Other Than
Honorable Conditions
VA – Department of Veterans
Affairs